

This Week In Agriculture

March 7, 2006

March 2006

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Upcoming events

National Alfalfa Alliance's Alfalfa Intensive Training Seminar in St. Louis. March 7-8. More information at www.alfalfa.org.

Western Regional Ag Ed meeting and Western Regional Ag in the Classroom meeting. March 18-22 in Boise. Call 334-3216 for more information.

2006 University of Idaho Extension Annual Conference. April 3-6 in Idaho Falls. Call 529-8376 for information.

75th FFA State Leadership Conference. April 6-8 in Twin Falls. Call 334-3216 for information.

This Week in Agriculture is a publication of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture.

To submit articles or subscribe to this newsletter, email rmason@idahoag.us

Panel approves governor's ISDA budget

The Legislature's Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee on Monday approved Governor Dirk Kempthorne's recommended budget for the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA). The panel voted 20-0 in favor of the budget. The proposal must still be approved by the House and Senate. IT would take effect July 1. The budget includes \$152,000 of general funds

to continue the Idaho Preferred branding program, used to market Idaho-produced products, \$29,000 for international trade promotions that is critical to expand the market for Idaho products beyond our borders, and \$30,000 to keep up with the demand for service in the Mexico trade office. Mexico is Idaho's third-largest export market and is growing in importance to Idaho agri-

culture. Additional money for CAFO inspectors and the combat of noxious weeds is also in the budget.

"We appreciate the committee for recognizing the needs and investing in the future of Idaho agriculture," ISDA Director Pat Takasugi said. "The budget will allow us to do a better job providing services to the industry and the citizens of Idaho."

ISDA marks Weights and Measures Week

You may not realize it, but the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) is more than just a regulator and promoter of Idaho agriculture. In fact, you interact with the department almost every day. Sometimes, that's at the supermarket, where we check the accuracy of the scales you use to weigh food.

At the gas station, we inspect the pumps to make sure you get what you pay for.

We test the accuracy of product labels, fuel octane ratings and investigate complaints about advertisements and short-deliveries.

The National Conference on Weights and Measures has declared March 5-11 "Weights and Measures Week." This week, we recognize the role accurate measurements plays in fair and equitable commerce.

"What would consumers do if this system did not exist?" asks Don Onwiler, chairman of NCWM. It's not like consumers can bring their own measuring devices to make sure they get their fair share for each purchase.

"It is not something each of us considers, but applying uniform weights and measures standards to commercial transactions is one of the most important supports to a strong national economy," said Don Onwiler.

For more information about ISDA's Bureau of Weights and Measures, go to <http://www.idahoag.us>. For more information about Weights and Measures Week, go to <http://www.ncwm.net/>.



NCWM

Ensuring a Fair Environment for Equitable Commerce

Weights & Measures Week

March 5-11, 2006

www.ncwm.net

Industry news

Idaho honey production in 2005 from producers with five or more colonies totaled 3.52 million pounds, a 44 percent decrease from 2004, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Honey producing colonies are estimated at 95,000 colonies, down 5,000 from last year's estimate. Yield per colony averaged 37.0 pounds, down 26 pounds from the 63.0 pounds in 2004.

Preliminary indications of prices received by Idaho farmers for the month of February showed increases for alfalfa hay, all barley, potatoes, all wheat, cows, and calves. Prices decreased for dry beans, all milk, steers and heifers, said NASS.

According to NASS, All sheep and lamb inventory in Idaho on January 1, 2006, totaled 260,000 head, down 4 percent from last year. Breeding sheep and lamb inventory on January 1, 2006, totaled 220,000 head.

Breeding ewes one year old and older totaled 178,000 head, down 2 percent from January 1, 2005.

Workshop to highlight rural opportunities

How do small communities attract tourism using their local artists, farms, ranches, and restaurants? Becky Anderson, founder and executive director of HandMade in America, a renowned rural economic development organization operating in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, will highlight these and other creative rural community and economic development strategies during luncheons and workshops planned throughout Idaho. (See locations and dates in the poster to the right).

Anderson's keynote, The Place-based Economy, aims to inspire and educate attendees by giving an introduction to the creative rural community and economic development strategies pioneered by HandMade in America. The workshop will address the "how-to" of these strategies with a focus on how Idaho can tailor these ideas for the benefit of entrepreneurs, business owners, and communities including: how to foster entrepreneurial agricultural, cultural, and crafts-based cottage industries utilizing a unique approach to community asset and cultural tourism development. Each workshop attendee will receive a copy of HandMade in America's unique tourism guidebook.

This keynote/workshop series is presented by the Idaho Commission on the Arts in partnership with Arts Northwest, USDA Rural Development, Idaho Commerce & Labor, and Idaho Rural Partnership.

Registration is \$15 per person and

includes lunch. Information, location details are available on the Web at <http://www.arts.idaho.gov/special/merge.aspx> or contact Delta James, Community Development Director, Idaho Commission on the Arts at (208) 334-2119.

IDAHO COMMISSION ON THE ARTS, ARTS NORTHWEST,
USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT, IDAHO COMMERCE &
LABOR, AND IDAHO RURAL PARTNERSHIP PRESENT:

MERGE



Idaho's Regional Conferences on the Arts Creative Community Development Series

Moscow - April 12 Sandpoint - April 14
Idaho Falls - May 2 Hailey - May 4
Boise - May 5



Goats help combat noxious weed populations

It took more than three years, but UI Extension Educator Shannon Williams has demonstrated that a herd of 1,000 goats can help control noxious weeds. Owned by Weed Goats 2000, the Spanish-Boar-Cashmere adult females,

plus kids, have grazed up to 38,000 Lemhi County acres.

When they grazed spotted knapweed once a year between the weed's bud- and bloom-stages, they not only stopped its spread, they shrank its

coverage by 7 percent. Williams says it takes three to four years before grazing reduces noxious weeds and cautions that it must be strategically integrated with biological and chemical weed-killing tools for maximum impact.